

Understanding TRICARE for LIFE

In October of 2000, the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2001 was signed into law and represents the most significant change to military health care benefits since the establishment of the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Uniformed Services (CHAMPUS) in 1966.

Changes in TRICARE will affect Medicare-eligible uniformed service retirees, and their spouses and survivors who are age 65 and over. The Pentagon estimates approximately 1.4 million people will be affected by the new pharmacy and health care coverage.

Q: What is TRICARE?

A: TRICARE is a regionally managed health care program for active duty and retired members of the uniformed services, their families and survivors. TRICARE brings together the health care resources of the Army, Navy and Air Force and supplements them with networks of civilian health care professionals to provide better access and high-quality service, while maintaining the capability to support military operations.

Q: Who is eligible for TRICARE for Life?

A: Medicare-eligible military retirees, their spouses and their survivors who are age 65 and over. Beneficiaries who turn 65 on or after April 1, 2001 **MUST** be enrolled in Medicare Part B. (Those who are 65 before April 1, 2001 are eligible without enrolling in Medicare Part B.)

Q: How do I enroll in Medicare Part B?

A: If you have already turned 65 – and have not purchased Medicare Part B – you can enroll each year from January 1 through March 31. Your coverage under Part B will be effective July 1 of the same year. A premium surcharge may be imposed on beneficiaries who did not enroll in Part B when they were first eligible at age 65. For enrollment and surcharge information, please contact the Social Security Administration toll free at 800-772-1213. Additional information is available on the Medicare Web site www.medicare.gov.

Continued on page 3

The Veterans Legislative Coalition – Your Connection with the Legislature

Have you heard of the proposed Veterans Memorial Plaza? What about plans to provide property tax relief to widows of disabled veterans? Who’s behind enhancing the state’s definition of a veteran? And what if state legislators have questions about WDVA’s master plan? Where do they get their information?

Since the 57th Legislature convened Jan. 8 in Olympia, much of the media focus has been on the operating budget and transportation. However, veterans issues are also receiving much-needed attention as a result of the guidance and leadership of the Veterans Legislative Coalition.

The VLC – created in 1989 – is made up of 29 representatives from veteran service organizations ranging from the American Ex-POWs to the Women’s Army Corp, as well as several members-at-large. The coalition – chaired by Dan Gogerty and co-chaired by Tony Woods – works together to present various causes, positions and concerns of veterans and their family members to the Washington State Legislature.

“When it comes to legislative matters, the VLC is probably the most important group of veteran leaders I know of,” said WDVA Director John King. “When an elected official needs to know how something will impact the veterans community, they don’t call us ... they talk to the VLC. And that’s exactly how it should be.”

The VLC maintains a “watch-list” of bills the members have chosen to support. At every weekly meeting, each bill is reviewed and discussed. Bills are assigned a primary contact person who is responsible for working with members of the Legislature to ensure each bill receives a hearing – and possibly a vote out of committee. During the meetings, the primary contact discusses the status of the bill and solicits support from other members to attend hearings and contact their legislators. This process provides specific information on each bill to all members of the VLC, enabling them to present a united message when visiting with elected officials.

As new issues are presented, official votes are taken on whether or not to offer the support of the Coalition. At times, guests are invited to speak at the meetings to provide additional information and insight to VLC members. During the 2001 session, the Coalition has been visited by Rep. Tom Campbell, R-Roy, former 35th district Rep. Doug Sayan, Colonel Terry Legg, Senior Army Advisor, 70th Reserve Support Command and Verne Pierson, Selective Service. Each guest is provided an opportunity to present his or her issue and receive feedback from VLC members.

In addition to discussing pending legislation, the VLC is a useful forum for representatives of the veterans service organizations to provide information on upcoming events. Before a meeting is closed, a roundtable discussion is held to ensure each member has the opportunity to share issues, ideas and concerns. This valuable exchange of information has made the VLC a clearinghouse for veterans issues and information in Washington state.

What: Veterans Legislative Coalition meeting
When: Every Friday at noon during the legislative session
Where: Washington Department of Veterans Affairs Headquarters

Questions? Contact Dan Gogerty at 360-275-6957; or Tony Woods at 360-867-0020



Dan Gogerty



Tony Woods

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Veteran Leadership – From the Top Down



There I was, sitting outside an office in Washington D.C., waiting to meet with Anthony Principi, incoming Secretary of Veterans Affairs. I was there with four other state directors from throughout the country. Each of us had important issues to discuss, so my time with Principi was going to be limited. What should I say to him?

Should I tell him about our master plan to build our new skilled nursing facility at the Veterans Home at Retsil? Or the plan to convert the Soldiers Home at Orting into a comprehensive rehabilitation facility serving younger veterans? Do I mention Washington state has the 13th highest veteran population in the nation with 642,000? Or should I point out that despite

ranking 13th in population, we are – according to the Fed VA – 42nd in health care dollars? Though some could argue we need additional money, is that really what I should be talking about?

Instead, maybe I should brief Mr. Principi on the leadership shown by Ted Galey, Director of Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN 20). I could talk about how he and his staff have utilized those limited federal resources in order to maximize services to veterans – not just in Washington State – but throughout all of VISN 20 (AK, OR and ID).

I could mention Tim Williams, head of the VA Puget Sound Health Care System and Jim Tuchschiidt, Portland Medical Center CEO and how the Federal VA is reaching out to veterans by creating Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOCs) in places such as Yakima and Bremerton.

Do I tell him about the critical leadership shown by our state veterans, such as Oria Berndt, Dick Kirk, Bob Westphal, Keith Sherman and Ray Miller on the Governor’s Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee. I could certainly acknowledge the support and guidance of Dan Gogerty, Tony Woods, Jim Monk, Fran Agnes and Dave Harris of the Veterans Legislative Coalition as we move the department’s master plan through the legislative process.

What about the coalition of counties and Joel Estey developing outreach to provide services to veterans? I could even mention the support and hard work of each of the Veteran Service Organizations and their officers as WDVA continues to reinvent field services.

Most likely, I should tell Mr. Principi that it is because of leaders like these – and many others – that the veterans community can stay focused on critical issues at a time when limited financial resources require such focus. I could say that there are exciting things happening in the Pacific Northwest as each segment of the veteran population is coming together as a whole. I could talk about an opportunistic future and how we all stand ready to move forward under his leadership. Or, I could simply tell him this a great time to be a veteran in Washington State.

(actually, I told him about all of it)

John King

Master Plan Update

One of the key items being followed this session is the progress of WDVA’s master plan. Money for the plan – a \$4.5 million appropriation and \$12 million in long-term financing authority – was included in the governor’s capital budget (House Bill 1359 and Senate Bill 5347).

Under the WDVA Master Plan, the state would build a \$47 million, 240-bed skilled nursing facility at the Washington Veterans Home at Retsil, while the Washington Soldiers Home and Colony in Orting would evolve into a short-term, comprehensive rehabilitation facility specializing in serving younger veterans.

While there have been preliminary hearings on the governor’s budget, the House and Senate will each craft their own capital budget which may or may not reflect the governor’s priorities. The department and the Veterans Legislative Coalition are meeting with key members of both the House and Senate budget writing committees to ensure the master plan language is included in whichever capital budget is eventually passed by the Legislature.

The regular session is scheduled to be completed on April 22nd. However, many long-time observers anticipate an extra session will be needed to complete the operating and transportation budget process.

For more information on the progress of the Master Plan, please contact WDVA Legislative Liaison, Heidi Audette at 360-725-2154.

WDVA Strategic Goals

- ◆ Improve the quality of care and services for veterans and their families.
- ◆ Continue investing in staff, and provide the tools that result in high-quality services.
- ◆ Maximize resources to honor the nation’s debt to veterans.
- ◆ Review core processes to anticipate and influence future needs.

Veteran Voices

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Veteran Voices is published for Washington State veterans and their family members, WDVA employees and Home residents.

Call 1-877-VETS-R-US (877-838-7787) for an application to either veterans home.

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When credit is given to the source, articles from Veteran Voices may be reprinted.

To obtain this publication in an alternative format call (360) 725-2169.

Q: When will TRICARE for Life be implemented?
A: On **October 1, 2001**, eligible beneficiaries who continue to receive medical care from their current Medicare providers will have TRICARE as their second payer.

Q: How will Medicare and TRICARE work together?
A: TRICARE, in effect, becomes the second payer to Medicare. There are no enrollment fees or premiums for Medicare eligible beneficiaries.

- When a benefit is covered by both plans (which will apply to the vast majority of health care services), Medicare will pay the provider first and TRICARE will pay second. TRICARE may pay applicable Medicare deductible and cost-sharing amounts.
- When a benefit is covered only by Medicare (for example, chiropractic care), the beneficiary may be responsible for any remaining costs after Medicare has paid the provider.
- When a benefit is covered only by TRICARE (for example, prescriptions), the beneficiary may be responsible for only the TRICARE cost-shares and deductibles.

The amounts Medicare and TRICARE will pay are based on the use of a Medicare-participating provider. If a provider does not accept Medicare assignment, TRICARE will cover up to a beneficiary’s legal liability (115 percent of the Medicare-allowed amount).

Q: When will the TRICARE pharmacy benefit be implemented?
A: On **April 1, 2001**, the new law gives TRICARE beneficiaries age 65 and over the same pharmacy benefit as retirees who are under age 65. It includes access to prescription drugs, not only at military treatment facilities, but also at retail pharmacies and through the national mail service program. Benefits of the program include:

- No enrollment fees or annual premiums for TRICARE pharmacy benefits;
- Modest co-pays when using the National Mail Order Pharmacy & retail network pharmacies; and
- Ability to use non-network pharmacies with higher co-pays.

Q: Should I cancel my Medicare supplemental insurance?
A: Many Medicare beneficiaries have asked when (or if) they should cancel their Medicare supplemental insurance (Medigap) policies. It has been recommended that beneficiaries do not make changes in any other health insurance until the all the details of the new benefit are known.

Q: Has the TRICARE Catastrophic Cap been changed?
A: Yes. TRICARE for Life reduces the maximum out-of-pocket expenses for all military retirees by 60 percent from \$7,500 to \$3,000 per year.

Q: Are retired reservists/guardsmen eligible for benefits under TRICARE for Life?
A: Yes. At age 60, reservists and guardsmen drawing retired pay (and their spouses) become eligible for TRICARE as long as they are eligible for Medicare and are enrolled in Medicare Part B.

Changes for Active Duty Members

It is important to note there are changes to TRICARE for active duty military members as well. Several important changes include extending TRICARE Prime Remote to family members and eliminating all co-payments for active duty family members enrolled under TRICARE Prime. In addition, by March 31, 2001, the delivery of chiropractic health care services will be a permanent part of the Defense Health Program for active duty beneficiaries.

Q: What do I need to do to be sure I can take advantage of TRICARE for Life?
A: **1.** Enroll in Medicare Part B by March 31.
For more information on your Medicare benefits, call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) or check on the Internet at www.medicare.gov. You can also visit any Social Security Administration office, or call 1-800-772-1213

2. Update your DEERS data.
This record must include your correct address and any changes in family status such as marriage, divorce, birth or adoption. Retirees should also update their Medicare Part B enrollment status. Retirees may update DEERS by:

- Going to the nearest military personnel office;
- E-mailing changes to addrinfo@osd.pentagon.mil;
- Mailing changes to:
DEERS Support Office, ATTN: COA
400 Gigling Rd.
Seaside, CA 93955-6771; or
- Calling the DEERS Support Office at 1-800-538-9552.

For more information:
Call 1-877-DoD-MEDS (1-877-363-6337);
Visit the TRICARE Web site at www.tricare.osd.mil;
Or e-mail questions to:
TRICARE_HELP@AMEDD.ARMY.MIL or
QUESTIONS@TMA.OSD.MIL

Beware of TRICARE for Life Enrollment Offers

With the announcement of the Tricare for Life health care plan some groups are offering to enroll people in TRICARE for Life for a fee. **There is no fee to sign up for TRICARE for Life.** All you have to do to be eligible for this new program is be enrolled in Medicare Part B, and ensure that your personal information in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) is current.

Court Rules Federal Government Broke its Promise to Retirees

The Federal Circuit Court of Appeals in Washington, D.C. ruled on Feb. 8 that free lifetime health care for two veterans retiring after more than 20 years of military service was an “implied-in-fact contract” and cited failure to perform a contractual duty when it is due, as a breach.

The intent of the original lawsuit – filed in July 1996 by retired Air Force Colonel George “Bud” Day – was to include all military retirees and their dependents. Day is seeking restoration of free health care for retirees and reimbursement of all money withheld from retiree’s pay to finance Medicare, as well as relief from future Medicare deductions.

The original class action lawsuit was narrowed to the original plaintiffs – William Schism and Robert Rienlie – with a motion included to make the lawsuit a class action suit. Because the motion was not acted

on, it will be necessary for Col. Day to resurrect it in the U.S. District Court.

In addition to the more than 20,000 veterans represented in the class action suit, Day said an additional three million Americans could be eligible for compensation, costing the government millions.

Monetary claims for Schism and Rienlie are restricted to a maximum of \$10,000 per plaintiff, to be awarded by the U.S. District Court in Pensacola, Florida.

The United States Government has 90 days to appeal the Federal Court of Appeals decision.

The full decision can be viewed at www.fedcir.gov/dailylog.html, Schism vs U.S. (99-1402).

Relatives of Korean War MIAs sought by DOD

The Department of Defense is searching for relatives of U.S. servicemen missing in action in the Korean War who can contribute information to help identify the war dead whose bodies are being returned to the United States.

According to a spokesman for the DOD’s POW/Missing Personnel Office, people with relatives who died in the Korean War and whose remains were not returned, may contact the military casualty offices for the armed services branch in which the relative served.

Relatives who wish to donate blood samples for possible DNA

typing will be sent a sample kit that they may then take to a doctor or clinic. The kits will be used to collect and preserve blood samples, which will be mailed back to the military laboratories for DNA analysis.

There is no charge for this service.

Toll free numbers for the military personnel casualtyoffices are:

Army, (800) 892-2490

Air Force, (800) 531-5501

Marine Corps, (800) 847-1597

Navy, (800) 443-9298

Below is a listing of the missing servicemen from Washington state.

For additional information, please contact the Office of the Deputy Assistant for the Secretary of Defense (POW/Missing Personnel Affairs) at 1-800-892-2490; or e-mail TAPCPER@hoffman.army.mil

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RANK	LNAME	FIRST MI	SERVICE	SVC NUM	PFC	KILLIAN	CHARLES	ARMY	RA19367835
					CPL	KINGSBURY	DELORAIN	USAF	AF19319571
					SGT	LAMPSON	HAROLD	ARMY	RA06916880
					LTJG	LEAR	RUSSELL	NAVY	O-498753
					MAJ	LEONBERGER	KARL	ARMY	O-01176106
					SGT	LIPSHITZ	KENNETH	ARMY	RA19261297
					SFC	LYTLE	JACK	ARMY	RA15419203
					CPL	MACHEN	WILLIAM	ARMY	RA19323701
					1LT	MAJETTE	MILTON	ARMY	O-00958966
					MSG	MASTERSON	HAROLD	ARMY	RA39195677
					CPT	MAXWELL	RAYMOND	ARMY	O-421419
					SGT	MCCLELLAN	MAURICE	ARMY	RA19335396
					MSG	MCINTIRE	MILLARD	ARMY	RA19088573
					PFC	MCKEON	DONALD	ARMY	RA19367779
					SFC	MELICK	KENNETH	ARMY	RA28992014
					MSG	MICHAELISKI	FELIX	ARMY	RA06713006
					PFC	MINOR	JAMES H	USMC	1275793
					SGT	NORDYKE	ELWYN	ARMY	RA19322551
					PFC	OLSEN	EUGENE P	USMC	1058513
					CPL	OVERTON	DONALD R	USMC	280562
					ENS	PAINTER	FRANCIS	NAVY	O-553412
					CPL	PASCHBECK	RUDOLPH	ARMY	RA19322297
					PVT	PERRY	KENNETH O	USMC	1057730
					PFC	PETERSON	LYLE	ARMY	RA19351553
					PFC	POWELL	SAMUEL	ARMY	RA19357336
					CPL	PRATT	GLEN	ARMY	RA19321857
					SFC	RICHARDS	FLINT	ARMY	RA37177967
					CPL	ROGERS	GEORGE	ARMY	RA20941358
					CPL	SAMSEL	DENZIL	ARMY	RA19250349
					TSGT	SARKILAHTI	MELVIN	USAF	AF39479049
					ENS	SCARSHEIM	HUGO	NAVY	O-508435
					CPL	SCHOENING	ROBERT	ARMY	RA19353852
					SGT	SHANKS	ROBERT	ARMY	RA19319179
					CPL	SHELL	GLENN	ARMY	RA19416913
					DC3	SMITH	MARCEL	NAVY	3861385
					MSG	SNIDER	GLENN	ARMY	RA39480119
					SGT	SOLOMON	RICHARD	ARMY	RA33192936
					SGT	SPARKS	HAROLD	ARMY	RA19197218
					PFC	SPILLER	ELMO	ARMY	RA19367639
					CPT	STAI	MELVIN	ARMY	O-2035983
					SGT	STEELE	JAMES	ARMY	RA19402861
					CPL	STROUP	JAMES	ARMY	ER57502643
					PFC	SUNDBERG	LEONARD	ARMY	US56116524
					SFC	SUTTON	DANIEL	ARMY	RA6521009
					SGT	TUTTLE	ALLEN	ARMY	RA19261249
					SFC	VALENCOURT	JOSEPH	ARMY	RA39482062
					MAJ	VIZINA	HAROLD	ARMY	O-01031036
					PFC	WEAVER	JEFF 'L'	USMC	1057762
					SGT	WILLIAMS	NATHANIEL	ARMY	RA19194119
					SFC	WOFFORD	LAWRENCE	ARMY	RA38726569
					PFC	YOSHIHARA	ELMER	ARMY	RA36908084

Attention WWII Vetetrans

History classes at Thomas Jefferson High School in Auburn are seeking World War II veterans in the Northwest to participate in a special history project. Their primary goal is to capture the stories of WWII veterans, while engaging students face-to-face with a significant living history of the world.

They are also looking for WWII memorabilia and artifacts that can be scanned or photographed to develop a photo archive at the high school, along with the edited interviews. According to the project instructor, Marc

Simmons, the veteran volunteers will receive a copy of the interview on CD or DVD.

For additional information, contact:

TJHS, Attn: Marc Simmons

4248 S. 288th St

Auburn WA 98001

(253) 945-5661

msimmons@fwsd.wednet.edu



New VA Secretary appointed

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Anthony Principi has been sworn in as the nation’s fourth Secretary of Veterans Affairs. Principi – a naval veteran of the Vietnam War – takes the reins of the nation’s largest health care system, a multi-billion dollar benefits program and a nationwide network of cemeteries. With an annual budget of \$48 billion, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) employs approximately 219,000 people at medical centers, clinics, vet centers, benefits offices and national cemeteries.

“I am honored that I will assume the leadership of VA employees who have chosen careers of service to veterans,” Principi said at his confirmation hearing before the Senate Committee on Veterans’ Affairs. “And, most of all, I am honored and humbled by the prospect that 24 million men and women who answered our nation’s call to arms may look to me for the benefits and services they earned.”

Principi served as Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs from 1989 to 1992, when he was named Acting Secretary by President George Bush. He held that position until January 1993.

A 1967 Naval Academy graduate, he served as commander of a river patrol unit in the Mekong Delta during the Vietnam War. He earned several decorations for his tour, including a Bronze Star with a “V” for valor.

Principi and his wife Elizabeth Ann, also a Vietnam veteran, live near San Diego, CA and have three children.

Smith to lead Veterans Affairs Committee



WASHINGTON, D.C. – New Jersey Congressman Chris Smith has been named chair of the House Committee on Veterans Affairs.

As chair, Smith will oversee a federal department with a \$48 billion budget, approximately 219,000 employees, more than 100 national cemeteries, a comprehensive benefits program and one of the world’s largest health care systems.

“I feel deeply honored and blessed to have the opportunity to serve those who have served our nation,” Smith said. “No one in America deserves more attention and tangible assistance than our veterans.”

Smith has served on the VA Committee for 20 years, most recently as committee vice-chair. He said his emphasis would be making sure the federal VA provides a “world class health care system and prompt and fair decisions on claims for benefits.”

Smith, 48, has been recognized as “Legislator of the Year” by the Vietnam Veterans of America, the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the Jewish War Veterans. He was elected to the House of Representatives in 1980.

Rumsfeld Sworn in as Secretary of Defense



WASHINGTON, D.C. – Long-time public servant, Donald H. Rumsfeld, has been named the nation’s 21st Secretary of Defense.

Originally elected to the House of Representatives in 1962, Rumsfeld previously served in the Nixon administration and was President Ford’s White House Chief of Staff before being appointed the nation’s youngest Secretary of Defense in 1975.

In remarks following his swearing-in ceremony on Jan. 20, Rumsfeld said, “I am grateful to the President for the opportunity to serve again as Secretary of Defense, and I look forward to working with the dedicated and talented men and women who serve in the armed forces and in the civilian ranks of the department.”

A Chicago native, Rumsfeld, 68, served as an aviator in the U.S. Navy from 1954 to 1957. He was awarded the nation’s highest civilian award – the Presidential Medal of Freedom – in 1977. Prior to being named Secretary, he was in private business.

Calendar of Events

March 25	Medal of Honor Day <ul style="list-style-type: none">Nakamura/Okubo Ceremony Mercer Arena, Seattle Center, 2:00 p.m. <i>(see page 10 for information)</i>	May 28	Memorial Day <ul style="list-style-type: none">Programs at Orting & RetsilMoment of Remembrance at 3:00 p.m.
April 15-21	National Volunteer Week	July 4	Community Events at Orting and Retsil Volunteers needed POC: Lynn Zemke, Orting 253-893-4511 POC: Catherine Shaw, Retsil 360-895-4376
April 9	Prisoner of War Recognition Day	July 7	Military and Veterans Day at the Races Emerald Downs Race Track POC: Duane Hughes - 206-220-6230
May 1	Loyalty Day	July 20	Seniors in the Park - Capital Lakefair Sylvester Park, Olympia
May 6-12	National Nurses Week	July 21	Korean War Memorial Wreathlaying Ceremony 11:00 a.m. Capitol Campus
May 19	Armed Forces Day		
May 21	Moment of Remembrance Candle Lighting Ceremony “Thank You America” recognition Olympia Capitol Rotunda - 12:00 Noon		



AMERICA

“Still Serving”

With more than 642,000 veterans in our state, providing for those in need can be overwhelming. Fortunately, we are blessed with volunteers who are never daunted by the task at hand. Veteran Voices wishes to acknowledge thousands of “veterans serving veterans” and their families by spotlighting various organizations and individuals who – year after year – continue to serve.

This issue of *In Focus* pays tribute to the more than 36,000 members of the Department of Washington American Legion and 9,700 members of the Department of Washington Auxiliary who do so much to make a difference.

American Legion Auxiliary’s Volunteer Endeavors

Concerned women – who took on the day-to-day responsibilities of life when their men went to Europe during World War I – initially organized the Auxiliary. When the veterans returned and the American Legion was founded in 1919, these women continued their supportive role and broadened their interests to include the entire community.

Today, the Auxiliary has implemented hundreds of programs for veterans, their families, young people and the community at large. In just one year, the American Legion Auxiliary volunteers contributed 18 million dollars – which is reinvested in VA medical centers and community programs – and ten million hours of service.

Wherever there is a VA hospital, VA medical center or VA nursing home, you will find American Legion Auxiliary volunteers providing comfort and aid to veterans and their families.

Major projects that receive the support of the Auxiliary are Girls State and Girls Nation; the USO lounges at SeaTac and McChord; Fisher House at Madigan; Sands Point and Walla Walla transitional housing; Comfort carts at Retsil and American Lake; and the Liver Transplant Unit in Vancouver.

For 54 years, the Dept. of Washington American Legion Auxiliary has provided holiday gift shops for VA medical facilities in Walla Walla, Vancouver, Spokane, Seattle and American Lake, as well as the Washington Veterans Home at Retsil.

These gift shops provide an opportunity for residents and veterans to choose gifts for everyone on their holiday shopping list, have them wrapped and even mailed, all at no charge. Held the beginning of December, the success of the gift shops demand many months of preparation, starting in August, when all units in the state receive packets with dates of gift shops at each facility and lists of needed items.

The day prior to the gift shop opening, Retsil Gift Shop chairman Doreen Hinrichs and her volunteers host a tea for staff members at the Home. “This provides us an opportunity to let the staff know what merchandise we will have, and gives us a chance to thank them for their support with the residents,” said Hinrichs.

“I don’t know what we would do without their personal knowledge of each residents’ shopping needs,” Hinrichs added.

This past December, the Auxiliary spent \$1,100 on postage to mail 285 packages from Retsil residents to their loved ones for the holidays. According to Melna Forrester, the Department of Washington Auxiliary Secretary/Treasurer, each of the VA facility gift

The American Legion “Still Serving”

For God and Country, we associate ourselves to the initial words of the Preamble to the Constitution of the United States.

Considered America’s largest wartime Veterans organization, the American Legion is a community-serving organization with over 1 million members – men and women – in nearly 15,000 units across the United States.

For 82 years, the Legion has been promoting community service, helping veterans maintain and understand benefit claims, dealing with VA issues, and participating in legislative concerns at the local, state, and national levels.

Just as impressive has been their dedication to promoting the welfare of the Nation’s youth, through scholarships, Boys State, and the participation of 100,000 in American Legion Baseball.

Involvement in programs to help America’s youth, including drug prevention, missing children and any youth program, is a top priority.

There are more than 36,000 member veterans in the Department of Washington, each serving their communities and the Nation.

For additional information regarding the Department of Washington, call (360) 491-4373 or americanlegion@qwest.net.

The American Legion Our Mission

- ◆ **The Flag** – “To protect our history, our pride, our freedom, and our way of life.”
- ◆ **Americanism** – “To preserve and enhance patriotism and loyalty to the United States of America.”
- ◆ **Children and Youth** – “To help all children realize their potential and become responsible citizens.”
- ◆ **Legislative** – “To implement the legislative mandate of the United States of America.”
- ◆ **National Security/Foreign Relations** – “To uphold the honor and integrity of the United States of America.”
- ◆ **Economics** – “To deal with economic issues that affect the welfare of the American people.”
- ◆ **Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation** – “To help veterans and their families understand and obtain their benefit claims.”
- ◆ **National Emergency Fund** – “Our devotion to the Nation in times of crisis.”

Every part of The American Legion Emblem has a meaning, a rich symbolism that a glance does not reveal.



The Rays of the Sun form the background of the Emblem, and suggest the Legion’s principles will dispel the darkness of violence and evil.



The Wreath forms the center, in loving memory of those brave comrades who gave their lives in the service of the United States, that liberty might endure.



The Star, victory symbol of World War I, signals honor, glory and constancy. The letters U.S. leave no doubt as to the brightest star in the Legion’s star.

MEANING OF THE AMERICAN LEGION EMBLEM

“There shines the Emblem of The American Legion, it is your badge of distinction, honor and service. It stands for God and Country, and the highest rights of man. Of its several parts, each has a meaning.”

IN THE LEGION Singing America”

American Legion Singing America”

together for the following purposes Those are the
the American Legion.

Service Organization, the American Legion was
ce organization which now numbers nearly three
00 American Legion Posts worldwide.

community involvement of its members by helping
ling with economic issues that affect all veterans
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preserving and enhancing patriotism and education
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th include teenage suicide and drug abuse
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a Washington – in 180 local posts – who continue
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ment of Washington American Legion, contact

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American Legion Mission

our honor, our flag”
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shops spend close to \$2,000 on postage each year,
since they include day-treatment patients also.

When asked about the Auxiliary’s involvement
in Washington state, Forrester said, “If there is a
need in the community, the Auxiliary is there.”

For additional information about the
Department of Washington American Legion
Auxiliary, call (360) 456-5995 or e-mail Auxiliary
President Janet Easley at easleyhj@willapabay.org .

***“If you do what you
always did, you’ll
get what you always
got.”***

Jan Pulvermacher, 2000-01
National Leadership
Chairman, American Legion
Auxiliary.

Legionnaires as Leaders in the Cause

The Department of Washington American Legion is brimming with leaders – at all
levels – who continue to give their all on a regular basis. Post chapters quietly take care
of veterans, spouses, widows and children in their own communities – and will continue
to do so – as long as the need is there.

Many undertake projects that they stumble upon in their personal lives and later see
the need to include the Legion support. Bob and Dolly Westpahl of Frank H. Hancock
Post #92 in Stanwood undertook one such project.

While visiting Dolly’s mother at Josephine Sunset Nursing Home in Stanwood, they
discovered more than 25 veterans were in residence, many with no family support. What
started out as a gesture of compassion – delivering a poinsettia plant to each of the
veterans for Christmas – has bloomed into a regular program of birthday and holiday
remembrances, as well as providing information and filing claims.

When asked about membership participation, Westpahl said many of their members
spend time daily volunteering for the Post, while many others can be counted on for
specific tasks. Al Sauterberg is one who shows up to peel and prepare potatoes for the
Post’s monthly brunch and prime rib dinners that are major fundraisers. His
dependability has earned him the nickname “Potato Al”.

“If everybody did just that much work,” said Westpahl, “it would be super.

“Our membership is made up of over 50 percent Vietnam-era, 40 percent WWII and
Korean-era, and 10 percent Persian Gulf. We could sure use more younger ones.”

As with every organization, those who lead set the direction for others to follow.
Leaders with a clear direction and purpose inspire greatness. Newly appointed Secretary
of the Department of Veterans Affairs and Legionnaire Anthony Principi, Jr., is just such
a leader. In his first message to his staff, Principi said, “I expect all of us to focus all of
our skill and energy on our mission of service. Our veterans gave their all for us. We can
do no less for them.”

For information on The American Legion, contact (360) 491-4373 or e-mail
americanlegion@qwest.net

AMERICAN LEGION EMBLEM



Two Large Rings: the outer one
stands for the rehabilitation of sick
and disabled buddies; the inner one
denotes the welfare of America’s
children.



Two Small Rings set upon the
star: The outer pledges loyalty
and Americanism; The inner is
for service to communities, states
and the Nation.



The words **AMERICAN LEGION**
tie the whole together for truth,
remembrance, constancy, honor,
service, veterans affairs and
rehabilitation, children and youth,
loyalty and Americanism.



Soldiers Home and Veterans Home Highlights

Ceramic Teacher considered Queen of Every Day

For more than 18 years, Gina Weekley has been teaching ceramics at Orting. As a contract worker, she can be found spending six days a week, two hours a day, instructing Nursing Care and Barracks residents in the finer points of producing professionally completed works of art.

But, during that same 18 years, this once-upon-a-time Queen for a Day contestant has also done more than 11,736 hours of volunteer work at the Home.

According to Activities Director Lynn Zemke, Weekley began volunteering at Orting after her husband, who was retired military, passed away. “Gina called and asked if she could work with the residents, teaching ceramics, since that was what she did for a living,” said Zemke. “She said she felt she needed to pay back for the benefits she had enjoyed as



Gina Weekley (right) has conducted individualized ceramic lessons at the Soldiers Home for 18 years.



a wife, and now widow, of a retired veteran, and instead of giving to the church, she’d give to the residents.”

By watching Weekley as she conducted a class in Nursing Care, it was obvious she loves what she does and she loves the people she works with.

Assisted by resident volunteer Ken “Cap” Capley, Weekley greets each student as they arrive and gets them set up to work on whatever project they left off with from their last class. Each student receives individual attention from Gina, who has taken the time to assess their strengths and abilities, likes and dislikes, and just how to provide them with the right tools for the job at hand.

Constantly on the lookout for bargains on greenware at shops around the Puget Sound area, she takes the residents’ orders for what they hope to work on next, and even has shop owners on the lookout for special pieces. Then, in her spare time, she travels around the area collecting the materials.

Just as important as the beautiful artwork being created, is the special bond Weekley seems to have with each resident.

“This is Alva Lee,” said Weekley. “She can outglaze me.”

“This is Leila Bouscher and sometimes I have to separate her and her husband John, because Leila gets too bossy and won’t let John do his own work,” Gina said, going from table to table.

“You know Fred?” speaking of Fred Brautigam. “Fred, are you wearing your hearing aids? If not, go back and get them,” she orders. Fred just smiles from ear-to-ear, letting her know he has them.

Then, in came Gladys Barnhart. The ‘Weekley gruffness’ – always given away by a twinkle in her eye – softened, and taking Gladys’ hands in her own, the duo treated everyone to a perfectly pitched, harmonized rendition of “In the Garden.”

Gina celebrated her 80th birthday with a special party given by staff and residents on Jan. 24.

Homes Complete VA annual inspection

Both homes recently completed their annual VA Puget Sound Health Care System inspection. Considered a good preliminary to the upcoming annual Medicaid inspections that both homes can anticipate, it provides an opportunity to look at areas where improvements could be made.

Orting’s out-briefing produced a basically deficiency free report.

“It is nice to have validated what we knew to be true – our staff is doing an excellent job,” said Soldiers Home Superintendent Jerry Towne. “Inspectors – who brought along eight trainees to observe – said the home record keeping is exceptional, our custodians are to be highly commended, our pharmacy is very well run, and they are impressed with the healthy interaction between residents and employees.”

For Orting, this comes on the heels of an infraction-free Medicaid inspection completed last fall.

Superintendent Bob Jones said the Veterans Home’s review echoed that of Orting.

“The inspectors were very, very complimentary about our social work program – which is a major step up from last year,” said Jones. “In fact, they commented it may be the best they’ve seen out of all their inspections.”

Jones said the inspection team also remarked about the quality of care the residents are receiving in the nursing program.

“They said the residents look healthy, the wards are clean and the staff are dedicated,” added Jones. “I’d say they were impressed.”

Laundry is an on-going task everyone understands

Think doing laundry once a week is a chore? Try doing it all day, every day for a family of more than 500.

Under the leadership of Laundry Manager Mary Treese, Retsil’s dedicated staff provides efficient laundry services to the home’s 346 residents, as well as the 183 residents at Orting.

Day after day, week after week, month after month, the soiled linens, towels, and personal clothing of the two facilities come in and regular as clockwork, they are returned clean and fresh.

Last year, the sixteen-person staff produced 2,184,560 pounds of sorted, tagged, washed, dried, pressed and folded laundry.

Working seven days a week, they process more than 6,400 pounds of soiled weight laundry each day.

“This is actually considered a small operation in the industry,” said Treese. “We operate with three, 200-pound washers, one, 55-pound washer and four, 125-pound dryers.

“One of the biggest challenges we have is doing the personal laundry for the residents,” continued Treese. “Everything you do at home when you do laundry, like checking the pockets and sometimes having to wash twice to get something really clean, we do here. But first, we have to tag each item, then sort – just like you do at home – and then all the clean garments are hung on hangers for delivery. When we find anything in the pockets, it has to be bagged and tagged. If there is money, it is delivered to the cashier for deposit into the resident’s account, otherwise we give the found item(s) back to the resident.”

Each day, driver Tom Adams comes and goes between the laundry facility and the Retsil buildings, bringing the soiled and returning the



clean. Three times a week he does the same for Orting. Besides picking up and delivering, he has sanitation requirements that must be met. After carrying soiled laundry, the inside of the truck has to be sanitized before clean laundry can be loaded for delivery. The carts that carry the soiled laundry have to be run through a sanitation process in a special room, taken in one side dirty, sanitized, and then removed through a door at the other side to prevent re-contamination.

Once the soiled laundry is delivered, it is weighed on the floor scale, tagged and sorted. After loading into one of the washers, an automatic solid-base chemical system is programmed to dispense the detergent. Once clean, the clothes are unloaded through a door at the back of the machine into the room where the dryers are, thereby eliminating cross-contamination. From there, it is moved to the dryers and then on to the folding, pressing and hanging areas.

Staff rotates weekly between the different rooms and tasks, thereby reducing some of the physical and mental strain involved in certain tasks – although all of the work involves repetitive movement of some kind. They are very careful to adhere to infectious control rules, wearing special covers and gloves and old shoes when working in the soil room, and removing them to proceed anywhere else in the facility.

Certain times of the year produce a heavier volume than others. According to Treese, flu season and the holidays produce the heaviest. Plus, colder days and heavier care-load generate more laundry. Fortunately, the staff – from time to time – has the assistance of resident helpers. “We are always happy to see them,” said Treese.

After items are clean, seamstress Katy Logan provides another important service. Tears are mended, missing buttons and broken zippers are replaced and individual requests are cheerfully met. Logan provides aprons and potholders for the food service staff, carry bags and cushions for wheelchairs, and special covers for body pillows. She makes the shower curtains, cart covers and recovers the bus seats. Even requests for arm slings, arm pads and window curtains don’t daunt her. Logan maintains the three sewing machines herself and has been sewing since she was 11. She has been the Retsil seamstress for the past seven years and a member of the laundry staff for 16 years. By the way, Katy turned 70 last fall.

When items can no longer be mended or repaired they are recycled. Terry towels become rags for food service, old blankets become



Katy Logan, Retsil seamstress, has been a staff member for 16 years.

custodial clothes. “Everything is recycled here,” said Treese. One more impressive detail about the laundry staff – they do their own custodial work.

A Day On

Productive and fulfilling are two words being used by Washington Veterans Home Superintendent Bob Jones to describe the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. volunteer clean-up at Retsil.

Work parties organized by Kitsap Community Resources/AmeriCorps brought an estimated 181 volunteers to the Home. AmeriCorps members were joined by Navy personnel and volunteers from local services clubs, churches, the Boy Scouts of America, South Kitsap High School’s Junior ROTC program and Kitsap County’s Youth Volunteer Corps. Retsil staff and individuals who simply heard about the project also participated. The project was one of the largest in the state of roughly 25 AmeriCorps-sponsored service projects.

The volunteers gardened, painted, cleaned and re-roofed a bus garage. The work party was followed by a chili cook-off lunch and reflection on the life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Jones took time to not only thank the volunteers, but many of the Retsil staff as well.

“We didn’t get to the bottom of our ‘to-do list,’ but we sure made a sizable dent in it,” said Jones. “I cannot express enough appreciation to all the volunteers, both from AmeriCorp and other organizations. Their energy and passion to do something good, not only in honor of Dr. King, but for our veterans, really speaks volumes to our staff and residents.”

“Credit also goes to Retsil staff in helping make this a total success,” Jones added. “Having nearly 200 people on site looking for something to do can be a challenge, but not in this case. Attention to detail and leadership were the keys and it all came together wonderfully.”



Street Talk... with residents of the WA Veterans Home

What is your favorite activity to look forward to in the springtime?



“I look forward to seeing the children in the springtime, with Easter Egg Hunts, big parties with presents and cakes and family gatherings. But the best is women in the springtime, you know, romance and women.”

Alvin Wood Evans



“Longer days, warmer weather and maybe going fishing again.”

Bud Badgley



“Working around flowers. I just love flowers, like lilies. They bring back so many memories, watching the leaves and flowers and birds.”

Gertrude Johnson



“Gardening. I grew up with a garden and I liked having our own dinner from what grew there. I always picture my mother in either the garden or the kitchen.”

Michael Patrick O'Shea



“I enjoyed when the Hiking and Climbing Club used to go on their spring overnights. We’d open the Olympic Hot Springs and drink a lot of beer.”

William Nickerson

Honor, Compassion, Respect

These are words that come alive through the volunteer efforts of a remarkable group of men and women who spend hours each month at the Tahoma National Cemetery in Kent.

Monday through Friday, volunteers from veteran service organizations from throughout the Puget Sound region assist the Tahoma cemetery staff by providing all veterans and their families with a final farewell. The services – complete with Military Honors and the rituals developed over time – help ease the pain of family members saying goodbye.

Groups from the American Legion, the Marine Corps League, the Disabled American Veterans and the Veterans of Foreign Wars rotate honor guard duties on

assigned days of the week, and the

Burien Elks provide an honor guard when there are five Fridays in the month.

Richard Ludwig, Tahoma Honor Guard Coordinator, said although each VSO group involved has their own honor guard, all the groups work together, when needed, by filling in.

“Each VSO is proud of their own rituals,” said Ludwig. “Many of the services are alike – providing a flag for the family, doing a rifle salute and playing Taps – but the rituals of each group are different. The differences are valued and respected and the groups have developed a warmth and a kinship for each other.”

The volunteers – split into two groups – cover the Public Information Center and the Honor Guards.

Those assigned to staffing the Public Information Center at the entrance to Tahoma greet all visitors as they drive in, answer questions and direct traffic as funeral processions line up. With as many as 14 funerals each weekday, the groups – each giving one day per week to the job – become friends and develop their own style of handling their duties. For example, some groups salute all processions as they pass through – caring about each and every veteran who has served their country, whether the procession is a lone car transporting a urn or 100 cars of grieving family and friends.

From the Information Center, the procession travels to one of the two committal shelters where VSO Honor Guards are lined up at

attention to direct parking, greet the family and provide a final tribute to an American hero.

Special requests of the families are honored during the committal services that are carried out by one of the 16 honor guard units. Their duties can range from providing the entire service, to assisting active military personnel with presentation of a flag to the family, and providing a 3-volley gun salute. Families are presented with three shell casings from the firing as symbolic of the tribute, after which *Taps* is played.

When retired schoolteacher Bernie Maskowitz – fondly nicknamed the “Little General” by fellow guard members – is unable to provide a live tribute of *Taps*, each shelter is equipped with a recording that is played from a built-in speaker at the shelter.

A common message delivered by all the volunteers is that all who have made their final journey to the Tahoma National Cemetery will

receive Military Honors, without regard to rank, whether retired veteran vs. veteran, and most important, even if the journey has been made alone.

Since the dedication of the cemetery in October 1997, the Tahoma Honor Guards



Milt Till assists Specialist Bock and Sgt. Finder as they refold the flag for presentation to the family.



Richard Ludwig, Tahoma Honor Guard Coordinator, presents the casket flag to the daughter of a deceased veteran.

have spent 800 days, 23,800 hours, and performed more than 2,000 funerals.

Why do these individuals spend so many hours providing these honors in an atmosphere heavy with grief and sorrow?

“Compassion for the families and the need to pay final respect to all veterans drives us,” said Ludwig.

“Plus, the knowledge that all of us will someday be there, on the other end.”



Public Information Center volunteers salute the funeral procession as it enters the National Cemetery. (L to R) John Yaw, Darrell Westover, Gordon Clark, Jim Winters, and Ed Blanchette.

Medal Of Honor Ceremony

The public is invited to honor two Washington State men who were presented, posthumously, our Nation’s highest military award for valor in combat, the Medal of Honor. The WW II citations for these men tell a heroic story of sacrifice for fellow soldiers in the midst of battle.

Yet the story behind these men and the unit they served in, give pause to all of us who now enjoy the freedoms they fought for. The men were of Japanese ancestry and they were forced to fight in a segregated combat unit composed of Japanese Americans while their parents and siblings remained confined in American Concentration Camps. Those who recall the racial attitudes of the early 1940s may remember the hysteria directed against anyone of Japanese ancestry. These men and their unit, the 100/442nd Regimental Combat Team (RCT) fought in Italy and France, while many of their brothers served in the Pacific with the secret Military Intelligence Service. Today we recognize, as President Franklin D. Roosevelt said in January 1943, “Americanism is not and never will be a matter of race or ancestry, it is a matter of heart and mind “

*Nakamura/Okubo Medal of Honor Committee invites the public to come and honor these brave Americans not only for their brave deeds but also for their faith in America during a time when America doubted them. PFC William K Nakamura, rifleman, “G” Co, 2nd Bn and T-5 James K Okubo, combat medic, assigned to “K” Co, 2nd Bn, both of the 100/442nd RCT deserve your thanks. The ceremony will be held **March 25, 2001, the National Medal of Honor Day, at the Mercer Arena, Seattle Center, beginning 2:00 p.m.***

National Moment of Remembrance

Memorial Day, established as a national holiday in 1868 to pay tribute to those who died serving our country, is frequently regarded as a day off rather than one to remember our nation’s ideals and those who gave their lives to preserve them.

At noon, Monday, May 21, 2001, a Candlelighting Ceremony will take place at the Capitol Rotunda in Olympia, in an effort to bring awareness of the meaning of Memorial Day, and the upcoming National Moment of Remembrance. In addition to the candlelighting, the World War II Educational Foundation will present it’s annual scholarship and World War II Veterans who participated in the invasion of Normandy and the liberation of France will be recognized by the French Government.

The National Moment of Remembrance was established in 1997 by a humanitarian organization known as No Greater Love. Their goal to put the “memorial” back into Memorial Day is intended to raise awareness and unite the nation in acknowledging the contributions made by the men and women who gave their lives for our country’s freedom.

The National Moment of Remembrance will occur on **Memorial**

Day, May 28, 2000 at 3:00 p.m. local time. The citizens of Washington are being asked to pause from whatever they are doing for a moment of silence or to listen to “Taps” in tribute to those who died for our country. Drivers in vehicles are asked to turn on their headlights at this time.

Dates to remember:

Noon, May 21, 2001
Candlelighting Ceremony
Capitol Rotunda, Olympia
The public is invited and WWII veterans who participated in the Normandy invasion and liberation of France will be recognized.

3:00 p.m., May 28, 2001
Memorial Day
National Moment of Remembrance
All Washington residents are asked to pause at 3:00 p.m. local time in a moment of silence for those who died for our country.

For additional information call (360) 725-2180 or e-mail colleen@dva.wa.gov



Sinking of the HMT Rohna

On September 12, 2000, Congressman Jack Metcalf of Washington state made a speech entitled, “Remembering the Rohna” on the floor of the House of Representatives.

This speech, entered into the Congressional Record, follows:

REMEMBERING THE SINKING OF THE HMT ROHNA
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Mr. Speaker, the greatest naval disaster in the United States during World War II was the sinking of the USS Arizona. 1,177 were killed.

The Arizona has been memorialized in the national consciousness.

On November 26, 1943, however, a loss of American military personnel of almost identical magnitude occurred when the British troop transport ship, the HMT Rohna, was sunk by a radio-controlled rocket-boosted bomb launched from a German bomber off the coast of North Africa. By the next day, 1,015 American troops and more than 100 British and Allied officers and crewmen had perished.

The U.S. troops aboard the Rohna have been largely forgotten by their country. I only learned of this disaster because a neighbor of mine on Whidbey Island had a brother who was lost when the Rohna was sunk. He made me aware of the issue and the book about the sinking of the Rohna.

It is a grim story. Hundreds died when the German missile struck. The majority, however, died from exposure and drowning when darkness and rough seas limited the rescue efforts. Less than half, over 900, survived, which was less than half. American, British and French rescue workers worked valiantly to save those Rohna passengers and crew who made it off the ship and into the ocean. The USS Pioneer picked up two-thirds of all those that were saved, 606 GIs. Many of those in the water had to endure hours of chilling temperatures before being picked up. As the evening moved into the middle of the night and the early morning hours, some men were speechless with the cold. Many died deaths of unbelievable agony.

The United States Government had not properly acknowledged this event.

Because inadequate records were kept, some survivors had to fight for years to prove that the Rohna even existed, let alone that survivors might be due some recognition.

Finally, at a 1996 memorial dedication honoring the Americans who died on the Rohna, survivor John Fievet spoke the following words:

“I dedicate this memorial to the memory of those who fell in the service of our country. I dedicate it in the names of those who offered their lives that justice, freedom and democracy might survive to be the victorious ideals of the world. The lives of those who made the supreme



sacrifice are glorious before us. Their deeds are an inspiration. As they served America in the time of war, yielding their last full measure of devotion, may we serve America in time of peace. I dedicate this monument to them, and with

it, I dedicate this society to the faithful service of our country and the preservation of the memory of those who died, that liberty might live.”

The men who gave their lives for their country on board this ship were heroes who deserve to be recognized and not forgotten. Parents of virtually all of them died without learning how their sons had died, because this was something that was not made public. Their brothers and sisters, wives and children need to hear their story. All Americans need to learn of their bravery and sacrifice. Not only do the victims of the tragic sinking need to be honored, but also their comrades, who survived, to be sent on to the Burma-India-China theater of the war and there to serve valiantly.

On November 11, 1993, Charles Osgood featured the Rohna story on his widespread radio program. For the first time, in 1993, a broad cross-section of America got to hear the story of some of its unknown warriors. Osgood revisited the subject two weeks later. According to Osgood, ‘It is not that we forgot, it is just that we never knew.’

Americans need to know about the Rohna. They need to know about the men, who died on board, sacrificing their lives in the fight against tyranny.

Americans need to know, and certainly must never forget.

On October 10, 2000 a Resolution (House Concurrent Resolution # 408), authored and introduced by Congressman Metcalf, was voted on in the House of Representatives and passed unanimously. On October 27, 2000, the Senate of the United States voted with unanimous consent to pass House Concurrent Resolution 408. This was accomplished with the help of Senator Max Baucus of Montana, Senator Patti Murray of Washington State and Senator Slade Gorton, also of Washington State. Senator Gorton’s office worked the measure through the various steps and procedures in order to bring it to the Senate for vote.

The House of Representatives, with the Senate concurring, has brought to the public’s attention an important event in the history of America during World War II that for 57 years was not properly acknowledged.

For more information on the HMT Rohna, visit the Rohna Survivors Memorial WebPage at www.whidbey.net/rohna/rohna.htm

Hats Off!

Veteran Voices

Veteran Voices is published for veteran advocates like Bob Westphal, American Legion Service Officer of Frank H. Hancock Post #92 in Stanwood. Westphal has also been a dedicated member of the VAAC for nine years.



“Thank You America” “Thank You America” “Thank You America” “Thank You America”

“Thank You America”

Are you a WWII veteran who participated in the D-Day Invasion and the liberation of France?

If so, you may be entitled to receive a certificate of appreciation from the French Government.

Contact the Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs at 360-725-2180 for an application.

Application deadline: May 1, 2001
Qualifying dates: June 6, 1944 - May 8, 1945

Presentation Ceremony
12:00 p.m. - May 21, 2001
Capitol Rotunda
Olympia, WA

At the request of the French authorities, certificates will **not** be awarded posthumously.

“Thank You America” “Thank You America” “Thank You America” “Thank You America”

“Thank You America” “Thank You America” “Thank You America” “Thank You America”